Meeting of Indian sugar mills Association with Food Secretary

916. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether representatives of Indian Sugar Mills Association in a meeting with Food Secretary on 15th September, 1994, warned that total sugar production this season would be only 12 million tonnes as against estimated consumption of 12.5 m. tonnes;

(b) if so, what steps are contemplated to bridge the gap without allowing increase in prices; and

(c) whether the sugar lobby also indicated that import of sugar can be totally avoided if, sugar is made totally free of control and that production can go up to 140 million tonnes, if so, what was Government reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) As per information available, the representatives of Indian Sugar Mills Association have not met the Food Secretary on 15-9-1994.

(b) With the estimate carry-over stocks of idigenous sugar at the beginning of the season 1994-95 and balance stock of sugar eariler imported, alongwith the production during the season, it is expected that there would be sufficient availability of sugar to meet the internal consumption during the season 1994-95.

(c) Indian Sugar Mills Association have been representing for de-control of sugar. However, for the present, the Government intends to continue the existing policy of partial control with a dual pricing system.

Overflowing stock of foodgrains in Government godowns

917. SHRI P. UPENDRA: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are huge stocks of foodgrains in Government godowns;

(b) whether Government have decided to permit export of rice and wheat to redce the over-flowing stocks; and

(c) what quantity of foodgrains will be allowed for export?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. The stock position of foodgrains in the country is comfortable. The position of stocks of foodgrains in the Central Pool as on 1st February, 1995 was as under:—

(Figures in Lakh Tonnes)

As on	Rice	Wheat	Total
1.2.95 (P)	184.36	115.76	300.12

(P)=Provisional

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Export-Import Policy of the Government allow the export of 5 lakh MTs of non-Durum wheat without Minimum Export Price from the open market during the 1994-95 and FCI is also eligible to export wheat within the said ceiling subject to certain conditions. The FCI has also been authorised to sell initially 50,000 MTs of wheat from the Central Pool to the STC and a quantity of 2.5 lakh tonnes to MMTC at the pre-

vailing open sale prices for the purpose of export. Recently, FCI has also been authorised to supply a quantity of 75,000 MTs of rice to STC for export to Bangladesh. FCI has also been authorised to supply 30,000 MTs of Superfine rice to Nepal Food Corporation.

Revival of food security proposal

918. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any move to revive the food security proposal, as per the report in "The Hindustan Times" dated the 19th February, 1995, entitled: "Government revives food security proposal"; and

(b) if so, the facts thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) The question of Food Security in the country is paramount in the making of Food Policy of the country and policies are framed to achieve the objective of food security in the country.

Damaged rise and wheat sold by FCI

919. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH:
SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether 11,683 metric tonnes of rice not fit for human consumption were sold by the Food Corporation of India for human consumption, as reported in the Hindustan Times of February 21, 1995;

(b) if so, what are the facts and necessary details in this regard;

(c) what are the details of the damaged rice and wheat sold by FCI i.e. quantity and value (State-wise) during each of the last three years and so far in 1995;

(d) whether according to the Expert Committee the damaged quantities of rice and wheat could not be upgraded and could never be made fit for human consumption;

(e) if so, why and under what circumstances these damaged quantities of rice and wheat were sold by FCI for human consumption;

(f) whether any enquiry has been conducted in the matter; if so, what are the details of the enquiry and what action has been taken against the persons found responsible; and

(g) what remedial steps Government have taken or propose to take to obviate the chances of such recurrence in future?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) No, Sir, 11,683 Matric Tonnes of sub-standard rice stock was put to sale, which could be made fit for human consumption after upgradation by the purchasers as appeared in Hindustan Times dated 21st February, 1995. However, the sale was not effected. This matter is sub-judice in the Hon'ble Suprem Court of India.

(b) A quantity of 11,683 Metric Tonnes of sub-standard rice in West Bengal was put to tender sale in August, 1993 with the stipulation that the stocks can be up-graded by the Purchaser and rendered to be fit for human consumption before issue.

Before opening of the tender, 4 Tenderers approached Calcutta High Court on different grounds. While the matter was pending in the Calcutta High Court to recategorise the stocks, one Shri Tapan Kumar filed a writ petition in Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court has reserved the order after hearing the arguments.